

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 01955 180105Z
ACTION IO-14

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H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
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INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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TAGS: UNGA, SH, UN
SUBJ: SWEDISH INVENTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES FOR
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REF: STATE 129285

1. SUMMARY: SWEDISH THIRD COMMITTEE REP RECENTLY INFORMED
US OF FOUR PLANNED INITIATIVES BY SWEDEN IN HUMAN RIGHTS
FIELD IN PREPARATION FOR GA. HE REPORTED HIS SURVEY OF
OTHER DELEGATES PLANS SHOWS THE ONLY OTHER WESTERN INITIATIVE
TO BE A BELGIAN PROPOSAL IN THE FIELD OF IMPROVING HUMAN
RIGHTS MACHINERY. HE SPECIFICALLY ASKED FOR USG REACTIONS
TO AN INITIATIVE CALLING FOR A DRAFT CONVENTION ON TORTURE.
END SUMMARY.

2. MISOFFS MET WITH SWEDISH THIRD COMMITTEE DELEGATE JAN
STAHL TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON A VARIETY OF PROPOSED INITIATIVES
FOR GA. STAHL, WHO IS GENERALLY CONCEDED TO BE ONE OF THE
MOST EFFECTIVE MEMBERS OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE, BUT WHO
WILL BE LEAVING IN MID-JULY, OUTLINED FOUR INITIATIVES
THAT HAVE AT LEAST TENTATIVE APPROVAL FROM THE SWEDISH FM.
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PAGE 02 USUN N 01955 180105Z

STAHL HAS DONE SOME PRELIMINARY WORK ON THESE PROPOSALS,
BUT IS COUNTING ON HIS SUCCESSOR (WHO HAS NEVER WORKED IN
MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS) TO CARRY THROUGH.

3. THE FIRST INITIATIVE IS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE SWEDISH
INITIATIVE OF LAST YEAR ON POLITICAL PRISONERS. STAHL
HAS ALREADY DISCUSSED SUGGESTIONS FOR A REVISED TEXT

WITH THE SOVIET DELEGATE AND HOPES TO GRAIN SOVIET SUPPORT AT AN EARLY STAGE. THE REVISED TEXT MAY POSE DIFFICULTIES FOR THE US IN THAT IT QUOTES EXTENSIVELY FROM ARTICLE 19 OF THE COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, WHICH RECOGNIZES RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. THE EARLIER SWEDISH DRAFT REFERRED TO ARTICLE 19 OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION WHICH CONTAINS NO SUCH RESTRICTIVE LANGUAGE.

4. THE SECOND INITIATIVE WOULD BE TO TAKE THE LEAD IN CONVENING THE DRAFTING GROUP TO WORK ON THE CHILE RESOLUTION. THE DUTCH, WHO HAVE TAKEN THE LEAD ON THIS IN THE PAST, ARE CONTENT TO LET THE SWEDES GO AHEAD.

5. THE THIRD INITIATIVE IS A RESOLUTION, STILL IN FORUMATIVE STAGE, UCALLING FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TO RECEIVE DRAFTS FOR A CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE BY THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMISSION, AND TO REPORT ON THESE TO THE 33RD GA. HE ASKED FOR AN INDICATION OF US SUPPORT FOR THIS INITIATIVE, AND OF US WILLINGNESS TO CONSULT WITH THE SWEDES ON ANY US INITIATIVE IN THE AREA OF TORTURE.

6. THE FOURTH INITIATIVE WOULD BE A RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE SIXTH UN CONGRESS ON THE PREVENTION OF CRIME AND TREATMENT OF OFFENDERS TO STUDY WAYS TO DECREASE THE NUMBER OF CRIMES PUNISHABLE BY CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

7. USUN RECOMMENDS THAT SWEDEN BE ASSURED OF OUR INTEREST IN SUPPORTING THE CALL FOR A CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 USUN N 01955 180105Z

ESPECIALLY IF A WAY TO SET UP SOME CONSULTATIVE PROCESS TO WRITE THE CONVENTION CAN BE FOUND THAT WILL NOT FURTHER OVERBURDEN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETINGS, AND AS LONG AS IT CAN BE MADE CLEAR THAT OTHER INITIATIVES ON MECHANISMS TO COMBAT TORTURE DO NOT NEED TO AWAIT THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE GA OF THE CONVENTION. THE SWEDES ARE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT OTHER INITIATIVES ON TORTURE, INCLUDING OURS, BUT WILL COOPERATE.

8. STAHL SAID THAT BELGIUM INTENDED TO OFFER AGAIN ITS RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A SELF-BINDING DECLARATION BY ALL NATIONS TO ACCEPT HUMAN RIGHTS INVESTIGATIVE TEAMS, AND INDICATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD SUPPORT EVEN THOUGH POSSIBILITIES OF CONSENSUS SEEMED MINIMAL.

9. WITH RESPECT TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER, STAHL ALSO OFFERED THE PERSONAL OPINION THAT THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CONCEPT WOULD HAVE A MUCH BETTER CHANCE OF APPROVAL IF THERE WAS A PANEL OF THREE HIGH COMMISSIONERS, OR

REGIONAL HIGH COMMISSIONERS, RATHER THAN ONE HIGH COMMISSIONER.
HE OFFERED TO SHARE HIS THOUGHTS AND RESOURCES FROM PAST
YEARS TO DEVELOP A PROPOSAL IF WE DESIRED. HE EXPRESSED
SUPPORT FOR US CONCERN FOR IMPROVING UN HUMAN RIGHTS
MACHINERY AND EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF OUR
DIFFICULTIES IN ESTABLISHING VIABLE PRIORITIES IN
THIS AREA.
MCHENRY

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